



Paul Helliher
Director

Department of Pesticide Regulation



Gray Davis
Governor
Winston H. Hickox
Secretary, California
Environmental
Protection Agency

March 18, 2003

WHS 03-03

TO: COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: STATUS OF METHYL ISOTHIOCYANATE MITIGATION DEVELOPMENT

I sent you an e-mail message on December 20, 2002 to inform you of the Department of Pesticide Regulation's (DPR) issuance of the risk management directive for methyl isothiocyanate (MITC) and our intent to develop mitigation measures to control off-site acute exposures. Several county agricultural commissioners (CAC) have asked questions about our timing for developing mitigation measures (e.g., permit conditions) and whether DPR will be scheduling meetings with them.

DPR continues to work with metam sodium registrants to develop mitigation proposals for MITC. DPR received a proposal from the Metam Sodium Manufacturers Task Force on March 11, 2003. We anticipate receiving another proposal from one registrant this week. This information will be reviewed by DPR staff in the next several weeks and considered as we develop a mitigation proposal for MITC.

I plan to send you a mitigation proposal for review and comments in early June 2003. I intend to set up two or three meetings in mid June in the San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast and possibly Sacramento for those of you that want to meet and discuss the mitigation proposal. As we get closer to finalizing the MITC mitigation proposal, I will send information out to all CAC's on the dates and locations of the meetings.

After considering your input, DPR plans to hold meetings with its Worker Safety Regulation Work Group (comprised of state regulatory agencies) and other external stakeholders (e.g., growers, pest control businesses, worker advocates, other interested parties) in July 2003.

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DPR anticipates finalizing the mitigation measures in the Fall of 2003 for implementation in 2004. If you have any questions, please contact me at the number below, or contact Joseph Frank, Senior Toxicologist from my staff at (916) 324-3517, or by e-mail at jfrank@cdpr.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

[original signed by C. Andrews]

Charles M. Andrews, Chief
Worker Health and Safety Branch
(916) 445-4222

cc: Mr. Scott T. Paulsen, Chief, Enforcement Branch
Mr. Daniel J. Merkley, Agricultural Commissioner Liaison
Dr. Joseph Frank, Worker Health and Safety Branch